

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 6, 2019

Contact: Shelby Unruh
Public Relations Coordinator
(580) 242-2750, Ext. 226
sunruh@autrytech.edu

Enid is Home to Oklahoma's Leading Respiratory Care Training Program

ENID, OKLA. — If you want to be a Respiratory Therapist in Oklahoma, you have five choices for your training program - Tulsa Community College, Rose State College, Francis-Tuttle Technology Center (partnered with Oklahoma City Community College), Cameron University (partnered with Great Plains Technology Center) and Autry Technology Center (partnered with Northern Oklahoma College).

If you are looking for the program with the best student outcomes year after year, look no farther than Northwest Oklahoma. Building a program like that takes strong support system made up of Autry Technology Center administration, NOC administration, clinical affiliate hospitals and doctors and truly dedicated students.

The Respiratory Care program opened in Enid in 2006 under the direction of Dr. Deryl Gulliford, RRT. Jim Grantz, BS, RRT, was soon added to the faculty as Director of Clinical Education. The program has just over 100 graduates to date, with a 96% pass rate on the board examinations conducted by the National Board for Respiratory Care. 94% of those graduates finding positions working in the field.

"Anyone who graduates from our program and wants to practice will find a position," said Program Director Dr. Gulliford. "With the Baby Boomers aging now, needing more and more medical services, the demand for Respiratory Therapists is great and growing! For the past two years, all of our senior students have found positions in the field before they even graduate. That is so valuable - for students to already know that they have employment while they are still in school."

After graduation with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Respiratory Care from Northern Oklahoma College, grads go to work at Integris-Bass Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital, Stillwater Medical Center, OU Medical Center, OU Children's Hospital, Bethany Children's Center, Mercy Health System and a variety of other medical facilities.

"We also have graduates in Wichita, Dallas, Houston, the Carolinas, and Montana," said Dr. Gulliford. "Over the years about half of our graduates stay right here in NW Oklahoma to practice, and the other half go bright lights, big city. But over the years, some of those folks find their way home to Enid."

"A real strength of our training program is the diversity of clinical experiences which our students receive," said Clinical Director Jim Grantz, BS, RRT. "Students rotate through: St. Mary's, Integris-Bass, Northwest Specialty Hospital – LTACH, Stillwater Medical Center, University of Oklahoma Medical Center, University of Oklahoma Children's Hospital, St. Francis Hospital – Tulsa, Hillcrest Medical Center – Tulsa, St. John Health System – Tulsa, Bethany Children's Center – Bethany and Pulmonary Associates of Enid – Drs. Brian Whitson and Sarah Matousek. Our Medical Director Brian Whitson allows students to rotate through his clinic and that is a tremendous experience for them, learning directly from the expert. We are the only program in Oklahoma with that opportunity as part of training."

A unique partnership between Autry Technology Center and Northern Oklahoma College contributes to the program's success. Program Director Dr. Deryl Gulliford is employed by Northern Oklahoma College, the degree-granting partner in the program. Clinical Director Jim Grantz is employed by Autry Technology Center.

“The NOC-Autry partnership makes the program work. I hold office hours at NOC and help to mentor students into the program,” said Dr. Gulliford. “My position on the NOC faculty permits the college to offer the degree in Respiratory Care. Meanwhile, Jim manages the clinical aspects at all of those hospital facilities, and we actually teach the RT courses at Autry. It is teamwork at its best, and it works to the benefit of our students.”

“I honestly do not know of anything that a person can train for in two years that has the earnings, the opportunities and the flexibility offered by Respiratory Care,” said Dr. Gulliford. “I am so glad that I chose this career myself and I strongly recommend it today. Right now, there are 50,000 open positions in RT nationally with 400 open positions here in Oklahoma. It is awesome to be able to go anywhere in America and find a good job. It’s comforting to know that our students will never be without employment and a good salary!”

The Respiratory Care program is 23 months in length and interested students can find an application online at autrytech.edu or contact Linda Belknap at 580-242-2750, Ext. 182. Interviews for the next entering class are scheduled for July 12, 2019.

Autry Technology Center has been a part of the Enid community since 1967 and is one of 29 CareerTech schools across Oklahoma. The center has more than 25 career programs and offers a wide variety of evening and weekend short-term courses and certifications for many diverse career fields. Autry serves nearly 16,000 individuals each year, including many area employees who receive training through the Business and Industry Services Department that works with over 500 local businesses each year.

###